

[26 April, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

For fiscal year 2000 (October 1999 to September 2000), the limit was 115,000 visas, which was reached by 21st March- 2000.

(c) Recent slowdown in the U.S. economy, and the announced retrenchments in some of the major U.S. IT companies has led to a decline in demand for professionals with H1-B visa. However, 72,000 H1-B visas had been granted till March 31, 2001, whilst 60,000 applications are currently under consideration. It might be added that between 40-50% of persons receiving H1-B visas are estimated to be Indian nationals.

Scientists Leaving DRDO

† *587. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether ten per cent of the scientists working in the Defence Research and Development Organisation are leaving their jobs in order to join private companies abroad;

(b) the reasons therefor, the efforts made so far to persuade them not to leave their jobs and its impact on the defence projects;

(c) the number of officers and employees working at present in the Organisation and the number of the scientists among them;

(d) whether the yearly target for recruitment of scientists is being fulfilled; and

(e) if so, the details of the vacancies occurred and the recruitments made during the last two years?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Scientists/engineers, when they leave do so as to private sector companies in India and abroad offer better emoluments. A new incentive scheme is being worked out to make DRDO job more attractive. So far, the impact on the defence R&D projects is minimal.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) The total number of officers and employees working at present in the Organisation is about 29,000, which includes about 5500 scientists/engineers.

(d) The yearly target of recruitment of scientists/engineers has fulfilled in part.

(c) The details are as under:

| Year | Posts vacant | Posts filled |
|------|--------------|--------------|
| 1999 | 460 | 321 |
| 2000 | 514 | 357 |

Increase in Road Accidents

†*588. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has a continuous increase in road accidents in the country;

(b) if so, the causes of such accidents together with the details of the steps being contemplated by Government to contain these accidents; and

(c) if no steps have been taken so far, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJOR GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) No, Sir.

(b) There are several factors *e.g.* lack of traffic discipline on the part of drivers and road users, phenomenal increase in the number of motor vehicles with no corresponding increase in road capacity,

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